Water crisis forecast

1507 SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent survey reports warning about drying of Aquifers in the coming years and forecasts of a severe water crisis in India; and

(b) the steps proposed for management and conservation of ground water in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) "Water" being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to take steps for management and conservation of ground water in the country. However, following steps have been taken by the Union Government in this regard:—

(i) Model Bill has been circulated to the States/Union Territories to enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development. Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has also notified specified critical areas for regulating drawl of ground water.

(ii) Steps have been taken to adopt artificial recharge and rain water harvesting measures which include, circulation of Manual/ Guidelines on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to States/ Union Territories, implementation of a Central Sector Scheme for Study of Recharge to Ground Water during the VIII & IX Five Year Plans.

(iii) Steps have been taken for creation of mass awareness on water conservation by holding mass awareness and training programmes on rain water harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water. Water conservation campaigns launched keeping in view the various target groups like youth and children, women, farmers and villagers, etc., publicity done through mass media etc.

(iv) The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), whose impact evaluations have shown that watershed based interventions have led to increase in ground water recharge. Soil and water conservation works are also included under various activities of area development programmes, being undertaken by the Department of Land Resources. However, funds under the above programme are not exclusively allotted for checking declining ground water, which is a resultant activity of moisture conservation works undertaken for the development of watershed areas.

Clearance of water-projects of Rajasthan

†1508. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some water projects of State of Rajasthan are pending with Central Government for clearance;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by when the pending water projects of the State would be approved in the current year; and

(c) by when these projects are likely to be implemented alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) Out of 14 irrigation project (8 major and 6 medium) proposals received from Government of Rajasthan, 9 irrigation projects (3 major and 6 medium) are under various stages of appraisal and 5 major irrigation projects are techno-economically accepted by the Advisory Committee of Ministry of Water Resources subject to compliance of few observations. The details of these 14 projects are given in the Statement (See below).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.